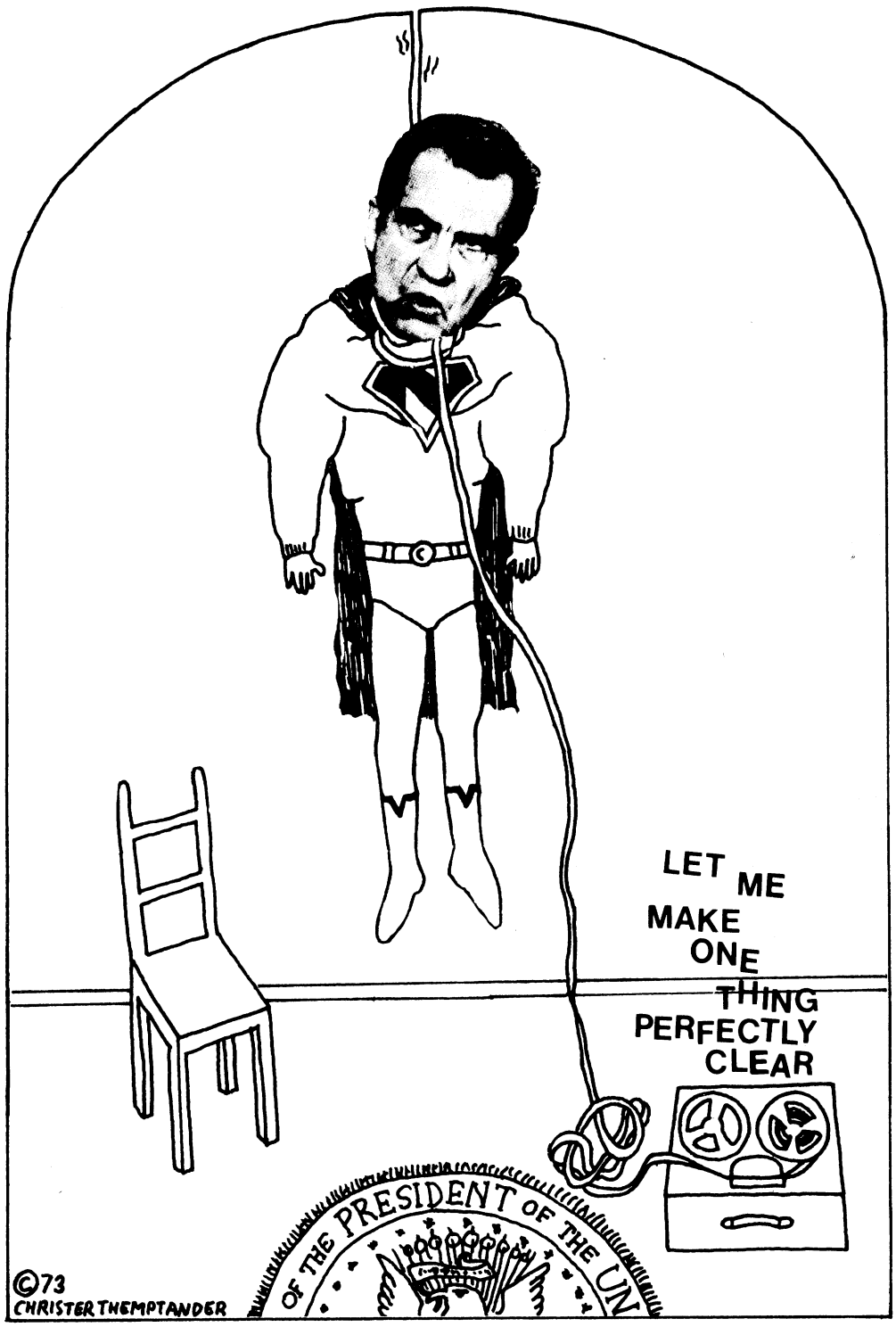

LIBERATION NEWS SERVICE

#583 January 19, 1974

Packet #583
January 19, 1974

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IMPORTANT GRAPHICS MESSAGE

We decided to try something different. Subscribers who file the graphics and also like to keep the inside front cover's table of contents have trouble doing both. Also sometimes we like to shoot the cover photo or line graphic larger than is most convenient. We decided to try including the cover graphic inside also. Please let us know if we should continue this, and always tell us any graphics critisism and ideas.

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COLLECTIVE: Beryl Epstein, Howie Epstein, Ellen Garvey, Cidne Hart, Barbara Plog, Sandy Shea, Mike Shuster, Jessica Siegel, Ron Sirak, Nancy Stiefel

COMRADES: Minton Brooks, Ron Alden, Linda Cohen, Safra Epstein

CORRESPONDENTS: Schofield Coryell--Paris
Richard Trench--Belfast

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CORRECTION

In the Wounded Knee story in packet #582 on page 7, one paragraph was particularly confusing. Please substitute the following for the paragraph beginning directly after the astericks on the first column on page 7:

Already jury selection has begun in St. Paul. The defense team includes radical sociologist Jay Schulman who helped work on jury selection in such successful cases as the Gainesville 8, the Camden 28 and the Pentagon Papers case. Schulman works with local people on a sociological survey for the area from which the jury pool is to be drawn. From a random selection of people who would be eligible for jury duty in the area, they try to evaluate the type of people who will be most open to defense arguments and how they will relate to other people on the jury.

The type of work that Schulman did on both the previous cases and the Wounded Knee case has received quite a lot of publicity. Many defense supporters have begun to suspect possible government manipulation of the jury pool since an inordinate number of people in the pool came from the more conservative rural south of the state. In fact, although there are 30,000 Indians living in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, there is not one Indian in the whole jury pool.

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AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO OUR SUBCRIBERS:

Things are not going too well financially so far this year. Money is just not coming in (and the end of the year, as you already know, wasn't good for us.) Please pay your bills and send us a little extra if you can. We have some big bills coming up and we haven't even had enough to pay salaries in the last few weeks. Thanks, LNS

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IF YOU ARE MISSING A PAGE OR GET A BADLY PRINTED GRAPHIC, LET US KNOW AND WE'LL SEND YOU ANOTHER SOON

EXPERTS SAY GAP IN NIXON TAPES CAUSED BY ERASURE: "THE MOST SERIOUS SINGLE BIT OF EVIDENCE TO DATE"

LIBERATION News Service

"It's like waiting for the other shoe to drop ...I don't know how many shoes there are to fall. I feel like I've been dealing with a centipede this last year."
--Senator Bill Brock (R-Tenn)

WASHINGTON (LNS)--As Gerald Ford was staunchly lashing out at "a few extreme partisans bent on stretching out the ordeal of Watergate for their own purposes" during a further attempt at "Operation Candor", still another revelation about administration hanky-panky with the famous tapes was revealed.

Six electronics experts presented their report January 15 that the 18 minute gap in the tape of the conversation between Nixon and Haldeman made by Nixon's secret tap three days after the Watergate break-in was caused by 5 to 9 separate deliberate erasures. The experts' testimony demolishes Nixon's secretary Rose Mary Woods' tale of her gymnastic feat of accidentally erasing the tape by holding her foot down on the peddle of the tape recorder while talking on the phone.

"This is the single most serious bit of evidence to date," said Rep. John Anderson of Illinois, leader of the House Republican Conference. "The theory that there has been a conscious effort to conceal evidence is no longer a theory."

The six electronics experts had been jointly chosen by the Watergate prosecution and the White House. All have jobs in the electronics industry or are private electronics consultants. One source close to the Watergate case said he was amazed that "six experts can agree on any subject."

Yet, after they gave their testimony, White House lawyer James D. St. Clair commented agitatedly, "I'm going to talk to my own experts." "I thought we were your experts," said Richard H. Bolt, one of those who testified.

* * *

Now, a year and a half after the Watergate break-in, investigations are zeroing in on the cover-up of the cover-up of the break-in. And the dirty footprints lead right up into the Oval Office of the big house on Pennsylvania Avenue.

The "Battle of the Tapes" went on all summer and into the fall with Nixon citing executive privilege and then finally agreeing to give up some "to avoid a constitutional crisis." Others suggested that he did it to avoid being cited for contempt and in an attempt to waylay some of the suspicion that he actually had something to hide.

However, the nine tapes subpoenaed were quickly reduced to seven by the White House. According to the White House, one tape--of a phone call from Nixon to John Mitchell three days after the Watergate break-in--was not taped after all because Nixon had made the call from his living quarters in the White House, where the phones don't have taps. The other tape--a conversation between Nixon and former White House Counsel John Dean on April 15, 1973 --was not recorded because the tap ran out of tape.

Things sort of floated along for a while. Rose Mary Woods testified in the beginning of November that she had been warned not to press the "Record" button--"And I think I used every possible precaution not to do that." "What precautions?" asked assistant special Watergate prosecutor Jill Wine Volner. "I used my head," Woods snapped back, "it is the only one I had to use." When one newspaper suggested there might be some erasures on some of the tapes, White House press secretary Ronald Ziegler said, he was "confident that there have not been any erasures."

Ten days later Woods reported to the court the "terrible mistake" that she had made October 1 while transcribing the tape. In trying to answer a telephone on one side of her desk, she pushed the "record" button instead of the stop button. She then reached for the phone and kept her foot on the foot pedal, thereby erasing the tape. Yet, when she tried to re-enact the whole incredibly acrobatic incident, which had her stretched into what Newsweek described as "a sliding-into third base position, her foot immediately came off the pedal as she turned to answer the imaginary telephone.

According to Woods, the conversation on the phone lasted 4-5 minutes though the erasure on the tape lasts for 18 1/2 minutes--long enough to completely erase any conversation Haldeman and Nixon had about Watergate.

What is known about the conversation comes from notes Haldeman made, which were subpoenaed by the court. The two had talked about Watergate as a public relations problem: "What is our counter-attack," said Haldeman's notes. "PR offensive to top this --hit the opposition w/their activities...we should be on the attack--for diversion..." The tape could possibly have revealed just what Nixon knew about the break-in.

So soon after the "gap" in the tape was revealed in court, November 21, Judge Sirica appointed the six-person panel of experts to investigate.

According to their report, the "gap" in the conversation occured because of a series of separate erasures rather than one long one-- which might have gone along partially with Woods' story. The experts found between 5-9 separate marks on the tape which appeared after magnetic fluid was applied to the tape indicating starting points of an erasure.

Also they reported that there were three tiny second-long sounds between two erasures suggesting that the person who tried to erase the conversation had backed up the tape to see if it had been really erased and had then not come back to the exact spot.

The experts never stated whether they thought the erasure was accidental or deliberate but under questioning by Assistant Special Watergate Prosecutor Richard Ben-Veniste, they agreed that the evidence found on the tape would be "consistent" with

the results that would have been found if there had been a deliberate attempt to erase the tape.

"If there had been an accident, it would have to be an accident that was repeated five times,..." asked Ben-Veniste.

"Correct," said Bolt.

The panel also determined that the tape recorder that Rose Mary Woods used to transcribe the tapes was used to erase the tapes.

With the heat getting so close to Nixon, White House Press Secretary Gerald Warren was forced to answer "no" to one reporter's question about whether Nixon himself erased the tapes. The rest of the press conference however, Warren just answered questions about the tapes and other Watergate-related matters: "Further discussion would be improper while this matter is in court."

At the same time it was revealed by Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein in the Washington Post that both Rose Mary Woods and White House staff aide, Stephen Bull had been pressured by others in the White House to take the rap for the erasure.

"Sources said that it was unclear if the President and his aides were trying to shift the blame for the erasure or whether they were simply trying to find out what happened. 'But,' one source said, 'the approaches had an edge to them and there is a lot more there than the White House is trying to investigate.'"

Further, in mid-November, "the President asked Miss Woods if she would take responsibility for the erasure of the full 18 1/2 minute portion rather than the 5 minute segment....she said no."

Woodward and Bernstein quoted another source who said, "They [White House officials] tried to pin it on (Bull)."

The White House denied the report as an outrageous story.

In the meantime, Judge Sirica has said he is thinking about calling a grand jury to look into the matter of the erasure of the tapes. If someone is found to have done it, they could be charged with obstruction of justice, for example, and they could get up to 5 years and a $5,000 fine.

The same day of the announcement by the experts, it quietly came out that Nixon was ditching Operation Candor and wont't be providing the public with a report on the Plumbers Operation, as he had promised as part of Operation Candor. Nixon has not submitted to questions from the press since his November 17 appearance before the National Association of Managing editors in Orlando, Florida, and it doesn't look like he will soon.

If Nixon seems to be showing less and less of himself these days, it's not surprising. Rep. Anderson called the report of the tape panel "the penultimate link in the chain of evidence that has steadily been forced to show that there has been a conscious deliberate effort to obstruct justice....Certainly a very limited number of people in the White House would have had access to that machine. Sherlock Holmes has solved a lot tougher cases than that...."

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CHILEAN JUNTA ACCELERATES CAMPAIGN OF REPRESSION AGAINST LEFTIST MEDICAL COMMUNITY

LIBERATION News Service

[Editor's Note: The following article is taken from material released by the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA).]

On September 17, in the Barros Luco Hospital, which specialized in treatment of contagious diseases, a military operation ordered the entire hospital staff to line up along a corridor. The Lieutenant in charge, with the collaboration of the National Party (far right) doctor, began one by one identifying the Allende supporters from the long row of doctors, nurses, aides and janitors.

Those singled out were escorted to the outer patio where they were executed immediately. I was the second to last person on the line and was standing in front of the doors to the hospital Chapel. Silently, a nun grabbed me and three other male doctors and snuck us inside the Chapel where we hid for one day. As we hid, we heard at regular intervals the shots that took the lives of our fellow hospital workers.

The following day, I casually resumed work, hoping to go unnoticed. I received orders to attend only wounded soldiers and not wounded civilians. During my shift, a large patrol arrived, which began to deposit the bodies of what I learned later to be 230 workers from the Industrial Textile Mill, SUMAR. A soldier told me that the nearby factory had been bombed when its occupants refused to surrender to the new government. Soldiers climbed over the bodies as they piled them up in two wards....

People were forced to attend wounded soldiers and military personnel at gun point, even though doctors sympathetic to the left had already been removed. The military was still afraid wounded soldiers would be left to bleed to death.

-- a young Christian Democrat doctor
in an anonymous message received by NACLA

SANTIAGO (LNS)--On January 2, the Chilean military junta accelerated and intensified its campaign against Chile's leftist medical community, by arresting Dr. Enrique Sepulveda, a pediatrician and supporter of the Popular Unity government ousted by a military coup on September 11.

In the two weeks since then, 5 more physicians who were known to be active supporters of the UP government were arrested. Orders for the arrests of at least 20 more in the Santiago area, were issued as well.

The doctors are being held incommunicado and no charges have been filed against them. In addition, it is reported that more than 60 "independent or left-wing" physicians are under investigation by military intelligence in the city of Valparaiso, Chile's second largest city.

The junta's attack on the UP medical system actually got under way immedately after the coup. One of their first priorities was to dissolve the various UP health programs and abandon its reforms, returning health-care in Chile to its pre-UP condition.

Before UP-sponsored reforms, 60% of the money

spent for health care was used to serve only 25% of the population. The remaining 75% of the population received only 40% of the health care expenditures. According to statistics from the government's National Health Service, there was one doctor to each 800 upper-class Chileans while there was only one doctor for every 2300 working class Chileans.

For the majority of Chileans, these statistics were demonstrated in fact every day. 79 out of every 1000 babies died before the first year; thousands of children died from diarrhea and bronchial pneumonia and malnutrition was so severe in some areas that mental retardation was a problem.

The UP government moved quickly to develop programs that would alter this situation. However, because Allende was saddled with a Congress dominated by the right opposition, it was virtually impossible to make fundamental changes in the way the health system was organized.

Yet, some things were accomplished. A massive milk distribution program was developed for children and pregnant and nursing mothers-- a program cancelled by the junta immediately after the coup for being too "inflationary." Paramedical training programs were set up to increase programs in preventative medicine and health information. Local health boards, including doctors, medical workers and representatives of community groups were set up to try to improve health services. Mobile clinics were set up to serve the campementos (working class slums) and the rural areas where few doctors chose to work.

The results of even this small beginning could be seen almost immediately. During one year of the UP government, infant mortality dropped from 79 to 71 deaths per thousand; advances were made against diarrhea and pneumonia and the distribution of milk increased by 792 million pounds.

Resistance to health care reform didn't come only from the rightist Congress. In fact, the majority of the nation's doctors were used to comfortable practices in Santiago or other large cities. One American who worked in a Santiago hospital up until the coup, noted that many doctors earned 100,000 escuedos per year, in contrast to the average worker's two or three thousand.

Fully 75% of the nation's doctors are thought to have supported the military coup and the bloodbath which followed.

In fact, doctors played a crucial role in the sabotaging of the UP government. Twice during the three years the UP was in power-- in October, 1972 and July-August 1973-- the Chilean Medical College (the Chilean equivalent of the AMA) sponsored "strikes" to support shut-downs by truck owners, shop owners, small entrepreneurs and bureaucrats. They also protested the freezing of their fees by the government--part of an attempt to curb the inflation being aggravated by the artifically created shortages and by the shut-downs.

These strikes involved doctors refusing even to answer emergency calls and sabotaging hospital equipment so that non-striking doctors could work. A close watch was kept on those who worked, and now this information is being used to identify "sympathizers of the UP.

These remaining independent and leftist doctors and health workers are now in danger. They face death, imprisonment, or, at best, loss of their licenses and unemployment.

For the resistence in Chile, it is a danger as well. What little health care that is trickling down to the poor (hit hard by an inflation which rose 87.6% between October and November, in spite of massive U.S. economic assistance) and to the 20% of the population now unemployed (much of this due to political firings since the coup) is sure to dry up when resistence surfaces. Obviously, should overt military conflict occur, even more health care will be needed by the poor and there is an even greater chance that it won't be forthcoming from doctors sympathetic to the junta.

The junta may be moving against the non-junta medical people precisely because they fear that the resistence is gathering force rapidly. The fact that two of their most wanted targets-- the Secretary-General of the Socialist Party and a member of the Central Committee of the Independent Left Movement (MIR) surfaced in Havana this month does not bode well for the junta.

The organizations which made their escape possible still exist and are working together with other left groups in an underground Committee of Unified Resistance (CUR), according to the French weekly Liberation.

It is clear that the independent and leftist doctors and health workers are going to be needed more than ever in the months to come.

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NEW BOOK RELEASED ON U.S. CORPORATIONS' ROLE IN SOUTH AFRICA

NEW YORK(LNS)-- The Center for Social Action has published a new book, Partners in Apartheid, by Don Morton. Rev. Morton, a Methodist clergyman, is a refugee from the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Partners in Apartheid examines the role of U.S. corporations in the maintenance of apartheid. The book gives an overview and description of the whole apartheid system, examines African poverty and living conditions and summarizes the laws that blacks live under in South Africa. It then provides documentation on the effects which U.S. corporations like IBM, Mobil, General Motors and Union Carbide have on the whole system.

Copies of the book are available for 75¢ each plus postage from:

Center for Social Action, Rm. 621
475 Riverside Drive
New York, N.Y. 10027.

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We need money, folks. We are several weeks behind in salaries and have to pay taxes this month. So far, our bookkeeper says that January has not been a good month for us-- people aren't paying their bills. Please, pay your bills, and some of the back bill too. thanks, lns

ANDERSON DOCUMENTS REVEAL U.S. OIL COMPANIES PUSHED SAUDI ARABIA TO INCREASE OIL PRICES

WASHINGTON (LNS)--According to documents recently obtained by columnist Jack Anderson, a giant U.S. oil combine encouraged the Saudi Arabian government to increase prices on crude oil. This move ensured greater profits for both the oil companies and the Saudi Arabian government--at the expense of consumers around the world.

Based on the papers supplied him, Anderson has charged that the Arabian-American Oil Company (ARAMCO), fearing nationalization of their Saudi operations, continually pushed for price increases throughout the year, "to squeeze out more profits before the takeover." In 1973 the cost of crude oil shot up an incredible 470%.

ARAMCO is a consortium of four U.S. corporations--Exxon, Mobil, Standard of California, and Texaco, plus the Saudi Arabian government, which produces about 90% of the oil taken from Saudi Arabia. Presently it is the world's third largest producer of petroleum, the largest Middle East oil producer and the largest exporter, surpassing in recent years both Venezuela and Iran.

According to information Anderson claims to have received from "sources inside ARAMCO who have access to its most secret files," the giant combine began early last year "agitating for higher prices."

Through a nifty little tax loophole designed to encourage U.S. oil companies to operate in foreign countries, ARAMCO benefits in two ways from the price increase. First is obvious: the higher the price, the greater their profits.

Secondly, however, the U.S. government allows oil companies to deduct as a tax write-off--dollar for dollar--any money paid to foreign countries in royalties or taxes.

According to Anderson, the cost of production for a 42 gallon barrel of crude oil is about 12 cents. In contrast, the posted price hit an all-time high of $11.65 a barrel on January 1, 1974. This price, besides representing a mark-up of almost 100 times the actual cost, is also fictitious. The actual price of a barrel of crude upon arriving in the U.S. is now closer to $9. But it is the posted $11.65 price that is used when computing royalties, and eventually tax write-offs.

In 1972, Exxon paid taxes at a rate of 6.5%, the highest of any of the companies in ARAMCO. At only 1.3%, Mobil paid the lowest, with Texaco paying at arate of 1.7% and Standard of California 2.05%. Theoretically, major U.S. corporations should be paying a tax rate of approximately 50%.

Anderson reports that "the confidential tables also indicate that ARAMCO gets a pay-back from Saudi Arabia for its technical help in developing new industries, such as salt production." Though the information is not totally clear, Anderson says that "it appears that the proportion of the pay-back increases as the price of oil goes up."

The documents reveal that ARAMCO is changing its method of operating in Saudi Arabia because of the increasing threat of nationalization. "Because the Saudis are expected to take over the oil at the wellhead," says Anderson, "the company is preparing to take its profits from refining and marketing. In the past it has been the other way around."

The initial results of this change? Well, as Anderson summerizes: "the secret documents reveal that the four ARAMCO partners are making a profit off the price increase. Only their customers are hurting."

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1974 TELEPHONE CREDIT CARD CODE REVEALED BY TECHNOLOGICAL AMERICAN PARTY

NEW YORK,N.Y.(LNS)-- In a recent journalistic coup, the Technological American Party (TAP) has again scooped the establishment press by announcing the 1974 Telephone Credit Card Code.

Pointing out that calls are best made in a rushed, business-like voice, and should be limited to 15 minutes so that the caller cannot be traced and caught, TAP also mentions that users of the code should call only from phone booths.

According to TAP the letter code is:

"1-N; 2-X; 3-Z; 4-A; 5-G; 6-S; 7-Q; 9-U; and 0-J.

"To use this code, add the city code and then the code letter to the phone number of a corporation. The letter is determined by the 5th digit of the phone number.

"Example: Litton Industries in Los Angeles phone number is 273-7860. The code for Los Angeles (not the area code) is 184 and the 5th digit is 8. So, the credit card number is 273-7860-184-F."

TAP adds that other city codes are: Spokane, Washington: 128; New York:012; Chicago:097; Washington,D.C.: 032.

Hypothetically speaking, to use this code to make a long distance call you would dial direct--"0", then the number you're calling. When the operator comes on, you would say (using an actual number): "Credit card #xxx-xxxx-yyy-z." Try to know the company name, area code and city, TAP advises.

If the operator asks anything besides the number of the phone booth you're calling from, she or he is suspicious, probably. You should hang up and try again from another booth. Be careful about what you say during a credit card call. The operators sometimes listen in, especially for the first few seconds.

If the phone company asks about credit card calls made to your phone, say you don't know anything about it, that it must have been for someone else, but don't talk further. "Be friendly but stupid," says TAP.

For more information, write to TAP: Room 504, 152 West 42nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036.

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PLEASE PAY YOUR JANUARY BILLS NOW

[See graphics for photos to go with this story.]

"I JUST DON'T LIKE TO BE DROVE:" A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE 1937 FLINT SIT-DOWN

LIBERATION News Service

(Editor's note: This past August, Chrysler auto workers in Detroit's Mack Avenue plant held out on a sit-down strike for 30 hours before police moved in with teargas to oust them. They were protesting speed-up resulting in unsafe conditions in the plant. It was the third major job action by rank and file workers in two weeks.

Wildcats--spontaneous strikes without union authorization--have long had a place in the history of auto workers. At this time of year 37 years ago, auto workers in Flint, Michigan, as well as Detroit, Cleveland, Janesville,Wisconsin,and elsewhere, were involved in a massive sitdown strike spurred also be assembly line speedup. The following is an account of that 44 day occupation taken from Strike by Jeremy Brecher. You can get the book by writing to Straight Arrow Books, 625 Third St., San Francisco, Ca. 94107.)

* * * *

From 1933 to 1935 auto workers in various plants turned to the sit-down and other forms of immediate job action. Their main grievance was speedup. As a 1934 study of the auto industry by the government reported, "Everywhere workers indicated that they were being forced to work harder and harder, to put out more and more products in the same amount of time and with less workers doing the job..."

As one Buick worker put it at the time, "You have to run to the toilet and run back. If you had to... take a crap, if there wasn't anybody there to relieve you, you had to run away and tie the line up and if you tied the line up you got hell for it."

"Where you used to be a man," complained another man, "now you are less than their cheapest tool." And another summed it up, "I just don't like to be drove."

By late 1936, spurred on by the large sitdowns of rubberworkers in Akron, Ohio, auto workers increased their actions. It was the "grooving-in" period during which new models are introduced and management, as usual, tried to increase speed and cut piece rates on new jobs. This raised resentment to a peak.

In Flint, Michigan, heart of the General Motors empire, there were seven work stoppages in the Fisher Body No. 1 plant in one week. One day the trim shop knocked off an hour early as a protest. Workers in another shop struck for an extra man and got the line slowed from 50 to 45 units. Another action won restoration of a 20% wage cut.

Henry Kraus, editor of the union paper in Flint and the author of The Many and The Few, describes this as "largely a spontaneous movement onto which the union had not yet securely attached itself."

In fact, as more and more workers pushed for a massive industry-wide strike to stop speed-up, the union held back. The UAW leadership believed a strike was necessary but wanted to postpone it until they were better organized. They resisted attempts to spread various strikes that broke out in November and December.

The union finally requested a collective bargaining conference with General Motors, the key company in the industry, and announced its demands: an annual wage adequate to provide "health, decency and comfort", elimination of speed-up, seniority, an eight hour day, overtime pay, spreading work through shorter hours, safety measures and "true collective bargaining."

But the individual plant sit-downs continued despite leadership's desire to wait. And when GM announced on December 28, 1936 that they were postponing a long-awaited meeting to discuss grievances, workers in the quarter panel department of the Cleveland Fisher plant pulled the power switch. Soon 7000 workers were sitting down.

Two days after the Cleveland strike began fifty workers sat down spontaneously at the Fisher Body No. 2 plant in Flint to protest the transfer of three inspectors who had been ordered to quit the union and refused. Later that night workers in Flint's Fisher No. 1 discovered that the company was loading dies--critical for making car bodies--onto railraod cars for shipment to plants elsewhere.

General Motors followed a policy described by the vice-president of GM as "diversification of plants where local union strength is dangerous." For instance, over half the machinery in the Toledo Chevrolet plant had been removed after a strike in 1935 leaving hundreds out of work.

The Flint workers were furious and after a short meeting voted to shut down Fisher No. 1 and 2.

Life -- Inside and Out -- During the Sit-Down

The thousands of sitdowners then faced the problem of organizing themselves for life inside the plant. The basic decision making body was a daily meetin of all the strikers in the plant. Groups of 15, usually men who worked together in the shop, set up house and lived together in their own corner of the plant. The union leadership had decided that only men would occupy the plants, to the anger of some women workers.

The actual work of the strike was done by committees on food, recreation, information, education, postal services, sanitation, grievances, tracking down rumors, coordination with the outside and the like. Each worker served on at least one committee and was responsible for six hours of strike duty a day.

Courts were established to punish infractions of rules. The most serious "crimes" were failure to perform assigned duties by not showing up, sleeping on the job or deserting. And punishments were designed to fit the crimes; for example, men who failed to take a daily shower were "sentenced" to scrub the bathhouse.

There was never a lack of entertainment among the strikers. A favorite pasttime was for the men to gather in a circle and call ou t the name of a member who would then have to sing, whistle, dance or tell a story. Each plant had its own band composed of mandolins, guitars, banjos and harmonicas.

Special attention was paid to the question of defense. A patrol made hourly inspections of the entire plant, day and night, looking for signs of company attack, and security groups were assigned to doorways and stairwells.

Outside the factories a network of committees supported the strike, organizing defense, food, sound cars, picketing, transportation, strike reflief, publicity and entertainment. Women were particularly important in the outside organization. Following a street dance New Year's Eve, about fifty women decided to form a Women's Auxiliary, and set up their own speakers' bureau, day care center for mothers on strike duty, first-aid station, and welfare committee.

After battles with the police began, women established a Women's Emergency Brigade of 350, organized on military lines, ready to battle police. "We will form a line around the men," announced a leader, "and if the police want to fire then they'll just have to fire into us."

The UAW coordinated the strike and put forward union recognition as its central demand. What recognition meant was never clarified, but workers assumed it meant a powerful say for them in industrial decisions and they supported it enthusiastically.

The strike spread rapidly from Flint and other initial centers throughout the General Motors system. Auto workers sat down at Guide Lamp in Anderson, Indiana, at Chevrolet and Fisher Body in Janesville, Wisconsin and Cadillac in Detroit. The company was forced to halt production at Pontiac, Oldsmobile, Delco-Remy and many other plants; its projected production for January of 224,000 cars and trucks was cut to 60,000 and in the first ten days of February it produced only 151 cars in the entire country.

General Motors Responds

On the third day of the strike GM lawyers requested and received an injunction from Judge Edward Black ordering strikers to evacuate the plants, cease picketing and allow those wanting to work to enter. The Sheriff read the injunction to the sitdowners who jeered him menacingly until he fled. Then a union lawyer discovered that Judge Black owned 3,365 shares of GM stock valued at $219,900 and the injunction was overturned due to conflict of interest.

The company also organized an anti-strike movement called Flint Alliance "for the Security of Our Jobs, Our Homes, and Our Community" which began anti-strike publicity in an effort to demoralize the sitdowners. Alfred P. Sloan, head of GM, claimed that the sitdown was a Communist attempt "to Sovietize" the auto industry as a "dress rehearsal for Sovietizing the entire country". And thousands of the "respectable" agreed with Rep. Clare Hoffman of Michigan that the sitdowners must be shot out of the plants.

For almost two weeks there was little violence in Flint. But on January 11 supporters carrying dinner to the sitdowners in Fisher No. 2 were stopped at the gate by plant guards. The pickets started taking food up a 24-foot ladder but the guards formed a flying wedge and seized the ladder.

Patrol cars drew up in a matter of minutes, closing off all traffic approaches to the plant and throwing gas grenades at the pickets and into the plant. But the sitdowners dragged firehoses to the windows and showered the police with two-pound door hinges. Within five minutes the police, drenched and battered, retreated from the vicinity. The police attacked again, but the outside pickets regrouped and drove them off. In retreat the police began firing their guns, wounding 13.

SOME HISTORY BEHIND THE SITDOWN

October, 1929 and the collapse of the stock market signaled the beginning of the worst depression in United States history. With it came enormous misery--loss of jobs, homes, farms, savings, even the means to eat. Within three years some 15 million workers were unemployed.

In 1933 Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal were inaugurated with the promise of government action to meet the social crisis. One central feature of the early New Deal was the National Recovery Administration (NRA). The NRA was essentially s suspension of the anti-trust laws which allowed trade associations for each industry to fix prices and establish production quotas for each company.

Labor support for the program was won by including as Section 7A, the provision that "employees shall have the right to organize and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing and shall be free from the interference, restraint or coercion of employers..."

Until the formation of the NRA, the American trade union movement was at a low ebb. The American Federation of Labor (AFL) had failed to combat the layoffs and wage cuts that accompanied the Great Depression and membership, far from increasing with popular discontent, went down with the slump. Workers had largely lost interest in trade unions and had turned on a considerable scale to various forms of direct action.

But with Section 7A guaranteeing the right to organize and appearing to make trade unionism part of the President's plan for economic recovery, workers throughout the country rushed to join unions.

The events of 1934 put an end to much of the idealism of the NRA (which came to be known as the National Run-Around). Industry refused to negotiate seriously with the unions and militant rank and file workers throughout the country pushed for strikes--on the docks, in the textile mills of New England and the South, in steel and auto plants in the mid-west.

Many workers were killed by police and National Guard who often fired directly into crowds. But NRA officials condemned the strikes as "menace(s) to government" and continually supported industry despite Section 7A.

The AFL was a source of disillusionment too for the historically conservative union tried its best in all situations to prevent a strike. Auto locals had formed inside the AFL in response to the NRA. But in several local auto strikes in Flint, Michigan, for example, the AFL played a strike-breaking role, even marching its members with a police escort into a motor products plant struck by another union. By the end of 1934, membership in the locals was very low.

A few, mostly young and militant, remained in the auto union however, and fought bitterly against AFL control. Eventually they took control of the union, aligning with the newly emerging CIO in 1936. [Committee on Industrial Organization--a radical sector of the AFL which wanted to unionize the unorganized basic industries, something the AFL did not want to do. Later the AFL expelled the

which then became the Congress on Industrial Organization.]

end of box

The conflict was quickly dubbed the Battle of the Running Bulls, and was considered a great victory for the strikers--a demonstration that they could hold out against police attack. In its wake previously hostile workers flooded into the union. It also caused the Governor of Michigan to order the National Guard into Flint.

Meanwhile pressure built up as strikers were attacked by police in Detroit, vigilantes in Saginaw, and both in Anderson, Indiana. At this point the local leadership in Flint devised a bold initiative to shift the balance of forces by seizing the giant Chevrolet No. 4 plant in Flint. And they succeeded.

GM tried one more time on the legal front to gain control. January 2 Judge Gadola issued a new injunction and when the workers ignored it he issued a writ of attachment and claimed authority to have the National Guard enforce it without the approval of the Governor. [Governor Murphy, previously one of the most liberal mayors in the country, had finally agreed to call out the National Guard, but still held back from using them against the strikers.]

In the final crisis, thousands of workers poured into Flint from hundreds of miles around--auto plants in Detroit and Toledo were shut down by the exodus of workers to Flint. To avoid the appearance of provocation, the mobilization was declared Women's Day and women's brigades came in from Lansing, Pontiac, Toledo and Detroit.

The crowd of perhaps 10,000 virtually occupied Flint, then surrounded the threatened Fisher No. 1 plant armed with thirty-inch wooden braces provided from the factory. City Manager Barringer decided to organize a 500-man "army of our own...We are going down there shooting," he announced. "The strikers have taken over this town and we are going to take it back."

But the rug was pulled out from under Barringer when General Motors agreed, on February 11, 1937, to recognize and bargain with the union in the struck plants.

The Union Wins Out

The agreement established the union firmly enough but it did little for the concrete grievances of the workers. When Bud Simmons, head of the strike committee in Fisher No. 1 was awakened and told the terms of the settlement, he said, "That won't do for the men to hear. That ain't what we're striking for."

When the union presented the settlement to the sitdowners they asked "How about the speed of the line? How about the bosses--would they be as tough as ever?" But the sitdowners were apparently convinced that the union could win their demands through bargaining, and left the plant--with a good deal of celebration.

The negotiations which followed the evacuation of the plants, however, bore out their fears. The fundamental demand of the strike from the point of view of the workers had been "mutual determination" of the speed of production, but under the collective bargaining agreement signed March 12, local management was to have "full authority" in determining these matters. If a worker objected, "the job was to be restudied and an adjustment was to be made if the timing was found to be unfair."

Such agreements were not enough to mollify workers who had just discovered their own power. The auto workers had assumed victory in the strike would produce some radical change in the structure of status and power in GM plants and as one worker later recalled, "every time a dispute came up the fellows would have a tendency to sit down and just stop working." Between March and June of 1937 there were 170 sitdowns in GM plants.

This indicated that the workers had developed the ability to coordinate action between plants and even between cities without the union. Union officials told the governor that they were "mystified" by the sitdowns and that "their representatives in the plants told them they had been 'pushed into' the new sitdowns without union authorization." Equally important, the workers won control over the rate of production, despite the union contract that conceded this authority to managment. The New York Times reported April 2,

"Production in the Chevrolet Motor plants has been slowed down to nearly 50% of former output during the last several weeks by concerted action of the union workers, with key men on the mother line stopping work at intervals to slow down production."

Together with CIO leader John L. Lewis, the UAW leadership blamed the wildcats on Communist agitation. But William Weinstone, Michigan secretary of the Communist Party--whose general position toward the sitdowns closely followed that of the CIO--hotly denied that the Communists were responsible and himself denounced "helter-skelter use of the sit-down."

The lengths to which union opposition to wildcats went is illustrated by an incident in November, 1937. Four workers were fired from a Fisher Body plant and several hundred of their fellow workers struck and occupied the plant in protest. UAW leaders denounced the strike, but were unable to persuade the workers to leave. They then convinced the workers to divide into two shifts and take turns occupying the plant. Concentrating their supporters in one of these shifts, the union marched the workers out of the plant, turning possession back to the company guards. When the other shift of strikers arrived to take their turn, they found themselves locked out.

It is not surprising then that a New York Times reporter found the continuing sitdowns due in part to "dissatisfaction on the part of the workers with the union itself." They hadn't reckoned on having the union become the agency for enforcing work discipline in the shops. Yet this had always been the essential policy of the CIO unions, however much they might utilize sitdowns as an organizing tactic. CIO Director John Brophy made this clear in a carefully worded statement before the General Motors strike:

"In the formative and promotional stages of unionism in a certain type of industry, the sitdown strike has real value. After the workers are organized and labor relations are regularized through collective bargaining then we do urge that the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

[see graphics for photo to go with this story]

100 PEOPLE MARCH IN SAN FRANCISCO FOR GAY RIGHTS IN CALIFORNIA PRISONS

SAN FRANCISCO (LNS)--About 100 persons marched through Castro Valley (a gay area of San Francisco) at the end of December and held a rally to support "A Petition for Gay Rights in California Men's Prisons." 15,000 people across California have signed the petition.

At the rally, the first speaker, Terry Leigh of Inside Out, a San Francisco gay men's prisoner support group that sponsored the demonstration, talked about why gay men frequently end up in prison. As one of Inside Out's leaflets put it: "Suppose you're a gay man who has to move away from home and live in a strange city to be openly gay. You have no friends who can feed you or put you up. Your money goes fast and you find there are hardly any jobs. If you look effeminate or if you have an arrest record, your chances of finding work are even smaller. Maybe before too long you'll be arrested for shoplifting or solicitation and end up in jail."

The situation is especially bad in California because of the state's indeterminate sentancing laws. Convicted felons are given sentances like 2 years to life--until a parole date is set, a prisoner has no idea how long he or she will be in prison. Since there are no legal standards for their decision, the Adult Authority (parole board) can use a person's gay sexuality or identity as a basis for postponing parole.

According to Inside Out, there is evidence that sentances are repeatedly extended for a year at a time because a prisoner continues to identify as gay while in prison.

Gay prisoners are often segregated into special units and barred from certain work assignments, including vocational training. Gay prisoners not in a gay unit run the risk of being intimidated, beaten up or raped.

Other speakers included Tere Roderick of the prison ministry of the Metropolitan Community Church, (M.C.C.) a gay church. The M.C.C. has a suit pending in Federal Court to be admitted into prisons as other churches are.

Four representatives of Inside Out made an appointment to present the petitions to Raymond Procunier of the California Department of Corrections (CDC) two days after the rally. When a group of supporters marched to CDC headquarters and attempted to present the petitions, neither Procunier nor his assistant were to be found. The representatives were met by two armed highway patrolmen who told them to mail the petitions.

The petitions demands include: an end to using a prisoner's gay sexuality as a basis for postponing parole; that gay prisoners have full access to all recreational facilities and programs; that gay prisoners be allowed to organize officially recognized social, political and religious organizations, with regular meetings and the right to invite outside speakers; that no gay prisoner be barred from any job or vocational training program in the system, and that new programs be started that meet the needs of gay prisoners; and that gay prisoners be allowed to choose between being housed in all gay units and being housed in the general prison population.

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ORAL CONTRACEPTIVES LINKED TO LIVER TUMORS

NEW YORK (LNS)--A recent study of oral contraceptives the medical magizine The Lancet indicates that they may cause benign but potentially fatal liver tumors.

Dr. Janet K. Baum and her co-workers report several cases in liver tumors in young women taking oral contraceptives. Normally, according to Baum, these tumors are rare and found mostly in children. Other researchers say these tumors are associated with cirrhosis, or with the use of hormones (such as those in oral contraceptives).

The investigators found that all the patients had been taking oral contraceptives from six months to five years. No evidence of cirrhosis, hepititis or a congenital condition was found, suggesting that the contraceptives might be the cause.

Previous studies have shown that women taking birth control pills increase their chances of having a stroke, have a greater susceptibility to fatal and non-fatal blood clots of other types, are twice as likely to develop galbladder disease, and have more chance of getting breast cancer.

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(thanks to the Daily World for the information in this short)

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7--

means provided within the wage contract for adjusting grievances be used by the workers."

But despite the efforts of both union and management, the wildcats in the auto industry continued--and continue to this day.

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CBS V.P. THREATENED BY RED MENACE

NEW YORK (LNS)--A segment of a recent episode of "The Waltons," about a young girl's first menstrual period was considered by a CBS vice-president to be too controversial to be shown.

Previously, network affiliates have reacted badly to other programs involving controversial topics, such as episodes on "Maude" about abortion, and the anti-war dram, "Sticks and Bones."

The "Waltons" script was rewritten and Mary Ellen Walton's first period was changed to her first kiss in the final version of the show.

According to Variety, CBS vice president Robert Wood indicated that "CBS affiliates would object to the hard reality of menstruation in the ordinarily soft romantic family series."

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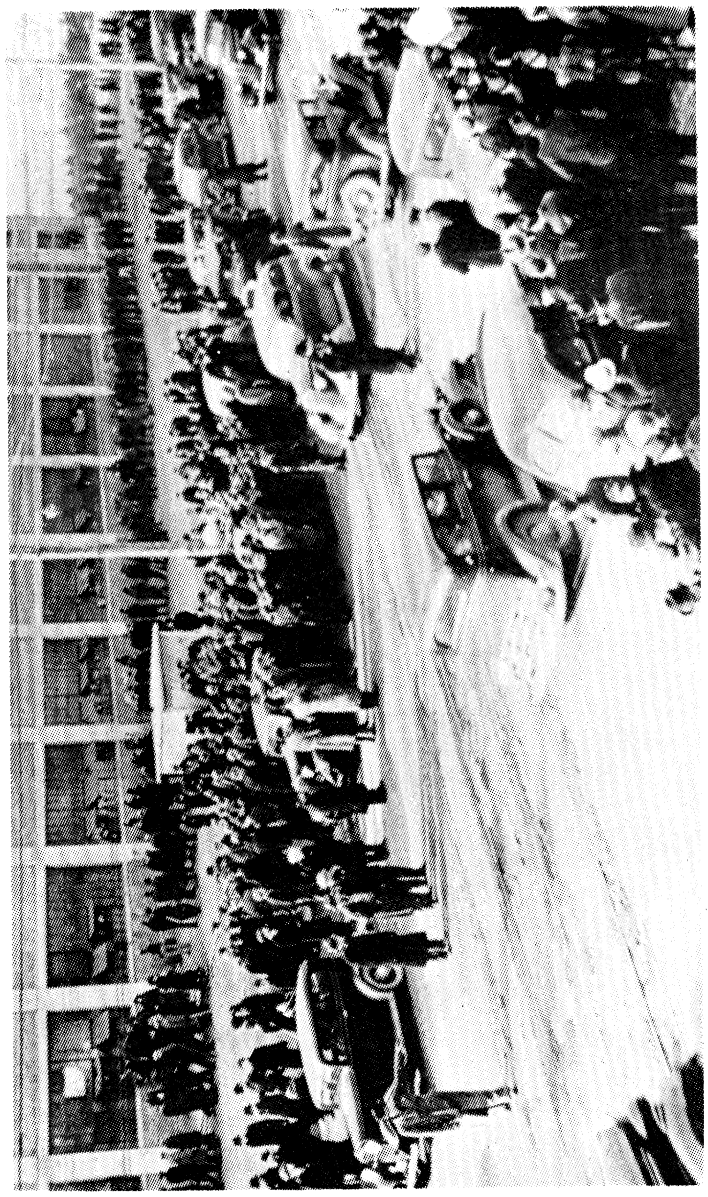

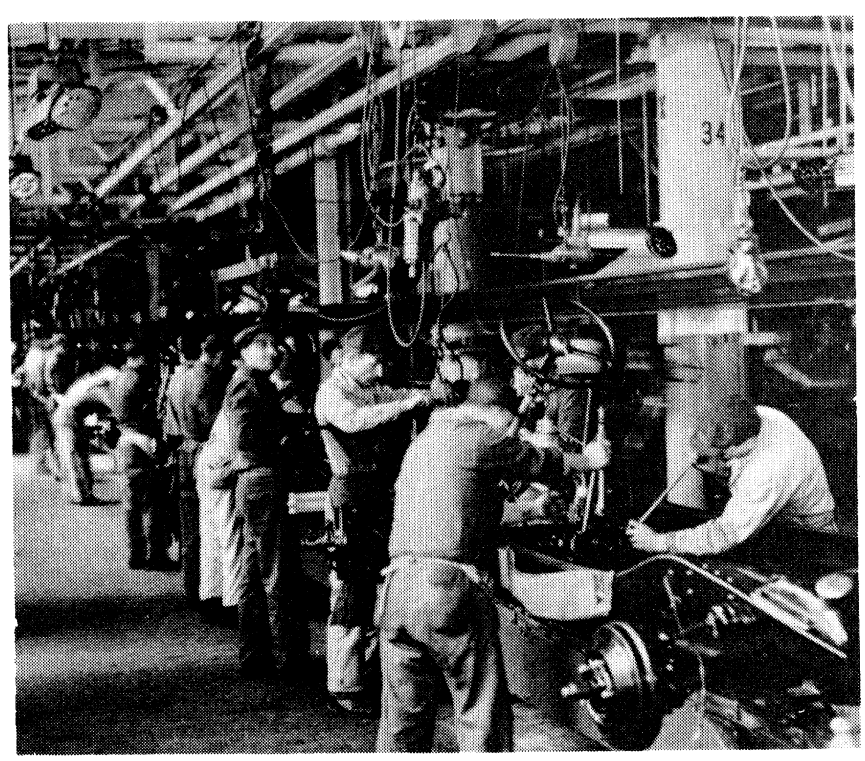
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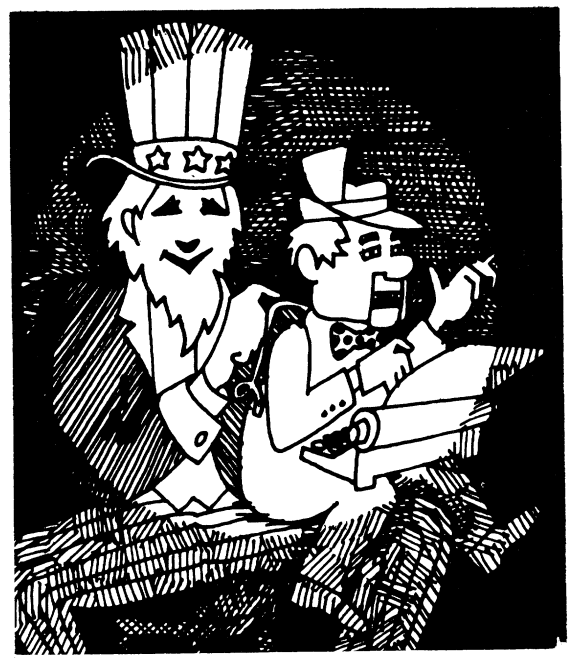
TOP RIGHT: Police and deputies chase strikers from the Auto Lite plant in Toledo, Ohio, May 23, 1934. An injunction was called against mass picketing, but the strikers and the unemployed of Toledo gathered anyway. The National Guardsmen were called out and 2 people were killed and 15 were wounded in one battle.
GOES WITH STORY ON PAGE 5 OF THIS PACKET (583).
PHOTO from the book, Strike, by Jeremy Brecher.

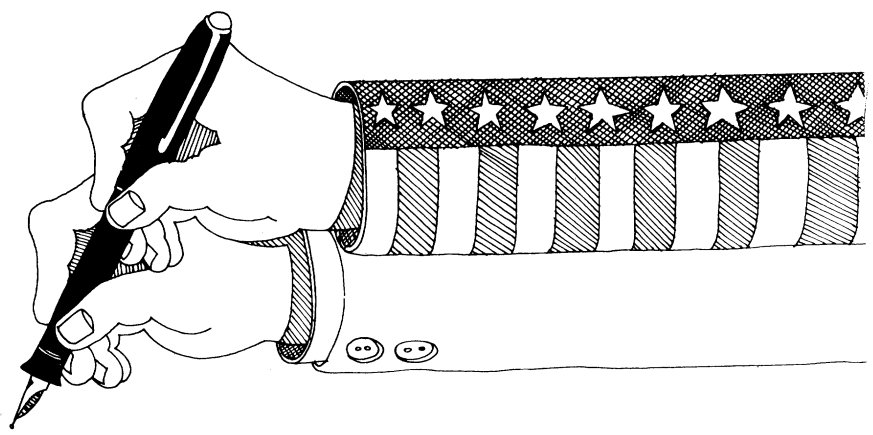
TOP LEFT: The outside of one of the GM plants in Flint, Michigan during the sit-down strike which lasted from Dec. 30, 1936 to Feb. 11, 1937. Supporters of the strikers continually surrounded the buildings with picket lines and provided food to the men inside.
GOES WITH STORY ON PAGE 5 OF THIS PACKET (#583).
PHOTO from book, The UAW in Pictures, by Warner W. Pflug.

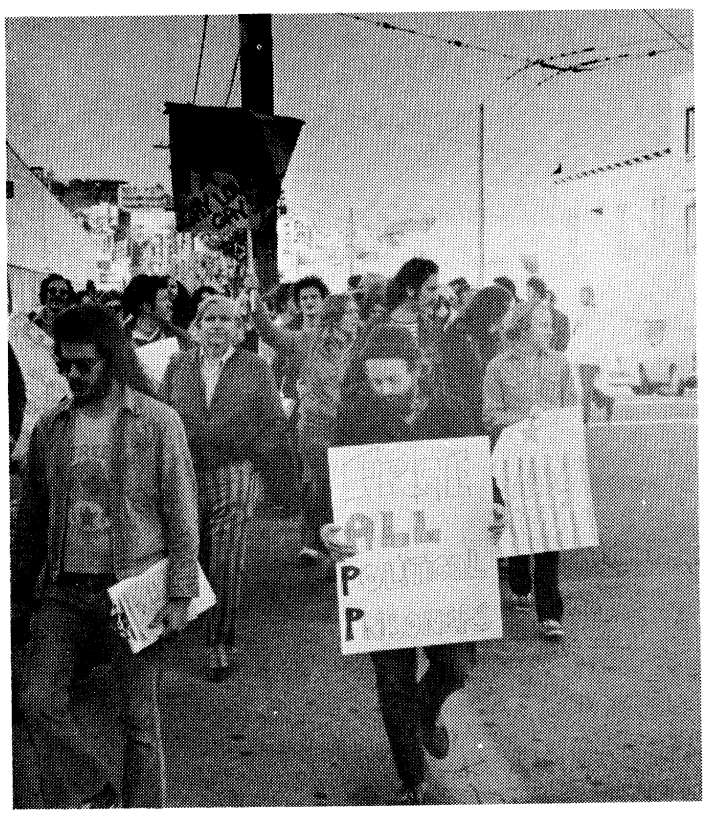
MIDDLE RIGHT: Men in Detroit's Cadillac plant reading papers during the sit-down strike in early 1937. They were on strike at the same time as Detroit's Fleetwood plant and Fisher Body Plants No. 1 and 2 in Flint, Mich.
GOES WITH STORY ON PAGE 5 OF THIS PACKET (#583).
PHOTO from the book, The UAW in Pictures, by Warner W. Pflug.

BOTTOM RIGHT: An auto assembly line in the 1930's, shortly after it was first developed.
GOES WITH STORY PAGE 5 OF THIS PACKET (#583).
PHOTO from the book, UAW in Pictures, by Warner W. Pflug.

BOTTOM LEFT: The Women's Emergency Brigade was important in the success of the sit-down strikes in Flint and Detroit in early 1937. They provided food to the people inside, and they maintained picket lines around the plants to keep the police and National Guard from entering the buildings.
GOES WITH STORY ON PAGE 5 OF THIS PACKET (#583).
PHOTO from the book, UAW in Pictures, by Warner W. Pflug.







SEAL OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

TOP RIGHT CREDIT: COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW/LNS

TOP LEFT: Tricky Dick plays the smoke-filled room.

CREDIT: Charles Shields/OLD MOLE/LNS

TOP MIDDLE RIGHT: Uncle Sam's puppet journalism.

CREDIT: COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW/LNS

BOTTOM MIDDLE RIGHT: Government and media - partners in propaganda.

CREDIT: COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW/LNS

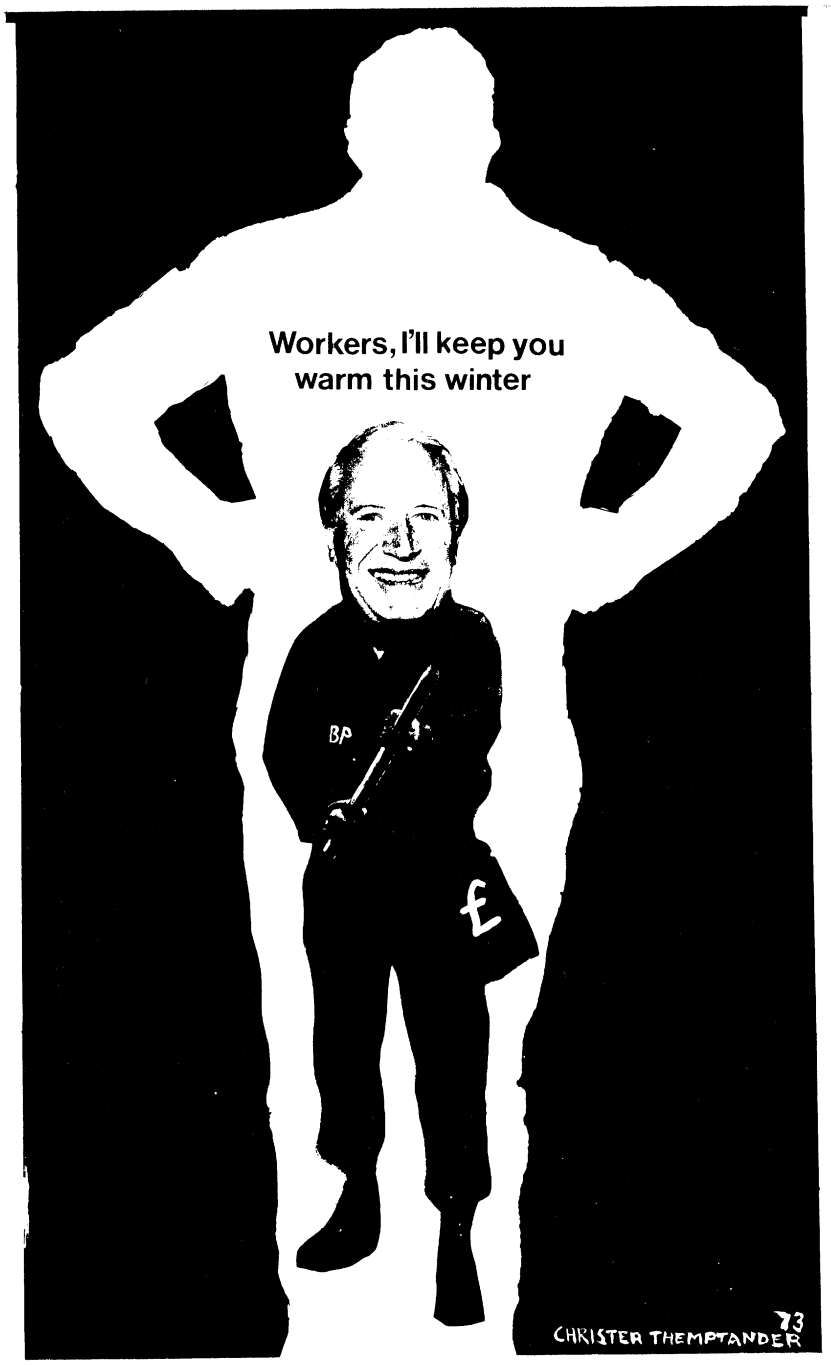
BOTTOM LEFT: Photo of gay rights march in San Francisco. May be used with the story on page 8 of this packet (#583).

CREDIT: Inside Out/LNS

MIDDLE BOTTOM: May be used with the gay rights march story on page 8 of this packet (#583).

CREDIT: Inside Out/LNS

BOTTOM RIGHT CREDIT: COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW/LNS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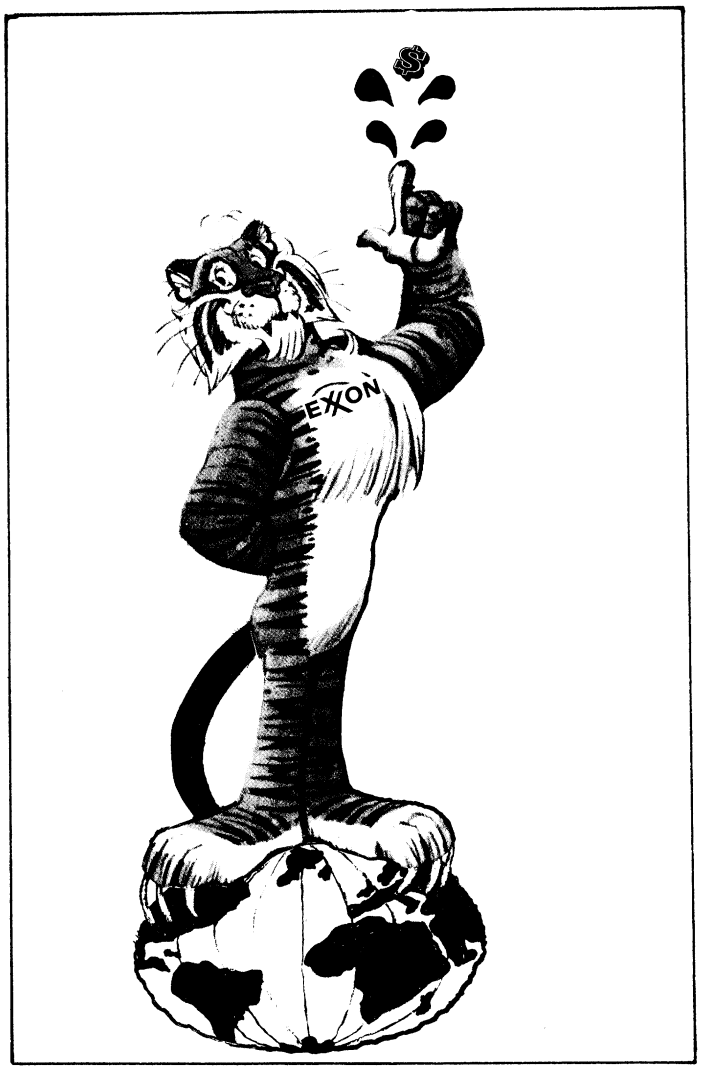
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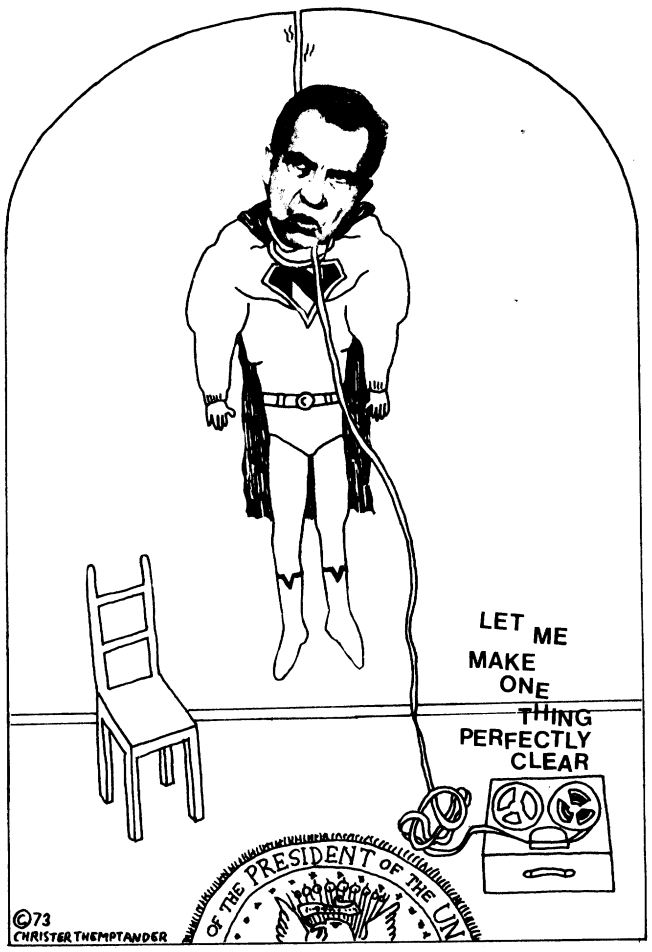
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